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Listen Ladies!

A Comedy in Two Acts

By
EMMA J. TRUE



BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER COMPANY
1922

Listen Ladies!

PS3539
.R89L5
1922

CHARACTERS

MRS. HOLDEN, *president of the church sewing circle.*

MRS. BROWN, *who wishes to be president.*

MRS. BACON, *on the apron committee.*

MRS. WHITNEY, *also on the apron committee.*

MRS. HARVEY, *who would rather read than sew.*

MRS. CRANE, *who keeps a cow and hens.*

MRS. GREEN, *a very observing neighbor.*

MRS. MCLEAN } *sisters, who are very apprehensive.*
JULIA KING }

KATIE, *a servant.*

Scene: ACT I. Mrs. Holden's library.

ACT II. A living-room in a camp in the woods.



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Listen Ladies!

ACT I

SCENE.—*The library in MRS. HOLDEN'S home; a well furnished room. Desk with telephone at c. Work basket, piled high with apron material. Folding table in rear. Couch L. front. Exits R. and L. Window c.*

(As the curtain rises, MRS. HOLDEN is sitting at her desk writing letters.)

MRS. HOLDEN. There, I'll not have time to write any more letters to-day (*Seals letters.*), for it is almost time for the ladies to arrive. One, two, three, four, five. Not bad for one day's work. I just hate to write letters, but this scheme of mine, to raise ten thousand dollars for a new library building, looked too good to let pass without trying. I wonder what the ladies will think of my plan for the women to pledge themselves to furnish five thousand dollars, and the men the balance. We need the building, which will be a great ornament to the town, and, if we are to have it, I see no reason why the men shouldn't work for it as well as the women. (*Rises.*) I am asking five of the most prominent business men in town to pledge themselves to raise one thousand dollars each (*Reads names on letters, which should be those of prominent men.*), and I suppose there should have been one to (*Insert a poor man's name.*); however, I think I will send these by special messenger so to get a reply as soon as possible. (*Goes to door R. Calls.*) Katie.

(Enter KATIE with scrubbing brush in hand and old cloth on head, looks bothered.)

KATIE. Did yez call, mum?

MRS. HOLDEN (*enthusiastically*). Oh, Katie! I've got the grandest scheme up my sleeve. It is too good to tell you about just now, but all the ladies are coming here this afternoon to talk it over and I want you to serve them some nice refreshments, with tea, about five o'clock. (KATIE *looks rebellious* and MRS. HOLDEN *takes money from purse, goes over to her.*) Here is something to cheer you up a little, Katie, and I want you to smile your sweetest to everybody, for I wouldn't want any of them to go away and say I had a disagreeable servant.

KATIE (*takes money, sighs, then forces a smile*). Well, mum, I'll do my best.

MRS. HOLDEN (*at door, L.*). I am going across the way, Katie, to get Mrs. Jones' little boy to deliver some letters for me. If any of the ladies come while I am out, you can ask them to be seated and to make themselves comfortable until I return. I won't be long. [*Exit.*]

KATIE. Now what's she up to this time? Every day in the week womens are comin' here for something and I have to l'ave me scrubbing, put on a white apron and cap, and serve refreshments to the whole gabbling lot of them. I'm getting about tired of my job and I'm going to tell her so if this goes on much longer. But every time I gets me mind made up to tell her I am l'aving, along she comes with one of these things (*Takes money out of pocket.*), shoves it into me hand and is off before I can get a chance to tell her what I have made up my mind to do. Billy the policeman says all women are blamed idiots, whatever that is, I don't know, but here it is two o'clock and nothing done. (*Bell rings.*) There's one of the lunatics now.

(*Enter Mrs. BROWN.*)

MRS. BROWN. The door was unlocked so I walked right in.

KATIE (*rushes forward, bows, smiles, and places chair for her*). Mrs. Holden will be right in, mum. [*Exit.*]

MRS. BROWN (*taking off hat and gloves, looks around*). Well, I am the first one here, as usual. I always have to

attend to everything myself (*Sees work basket.*), nobody else seems to feel any responsibility whatever. Two o'clock and not one of those women here yet. If I was president of this society I should make it a point to be here on time, and I should feel it my duty to look out for things a little; but such things don't seem to enter Mrs. Holden's mind. Look at this basket piled high with work, and it's her place to attend to getting them started. Well, if the ladies all want her for their president, very well and good, but I must say I think I'd make a good deal better one myself. Talk about an early meeting for work! Humph! They'll get here in time for refreshments and take about three stitches, then make some excuse for going home, saying they have to see to the children (*Sarcastically.*), or their husband has an early supper, or some other hatched-up yarn. For my part, I like the truth and nothing but the truth. (*Sits.*) Well, I will get right down to work and be a shining example to the rest of them when they come. (*Sews.*)

(*Enter MRS. HARVEY with work-bag.*)

MRS. HARVEY. Good-afternoon, Mrs. Brown. You're here first, as usual. What an energetic woman you are!

MRS. BROWN. It's lucky there is one energetic woman in the circle. There is a great deal of sewing to be finished to-day, and I suppose I shall have to do my part and half of all the others. (*Sews rapidly.*)

MRS. HARVEY. I just hate sewing. (*Looks in bag.*) There, I've left my thimble at home, and my glasses. I thought they were all in my bag along with this book, which I brought to read to the ladies from, while they are sewing. I told my husband this morning that I didn't feel like coming here to-day, only Mrs. Green telephoned she thought there would be refreshments and I knew I should enjoy that part of the afternoon.

(*Reads book.*)

MRS. BROWN (*aside*). Well, I never heard of anything to beat that. (*Aloud.*) I think we can dispense with your reading to-day, Mrs. Harvey, and if you are

feeling well enough to come here for refreshments you are well enough to work on this apron. I can furnish you with a thimble.

(Passes her apron and finds thimble in bag. MRS. HARVEY takes apron, sews awkwardly, then resumes her reading. Enter MRS. BACON.)

MRS. BACON. Good-afternoon, ladies. Beautiful day, isn't it?

MRS. BROWN. }
MRS. HARVEY. } Good-afternoon, Mrs. Bacon.

MRS. BACON *(taking off hat)*. Hasn't Mrs. Whitney come yet? She is on the apron committee with me and there are ten more aprons to be cut to-day. *(Sets up table and begins to cut aprons.)* I intended to be here early for once but I thought I should never get my washing out this morning. To begin with, Henry went off and forgot to bring up the tubs. Then when I was filling the boiler a telephone message came from the Shaw Water Company that some kind of a wild animal had fallen into Squaw Mountain Pond and they were going to shut off the water. Then I went across the way to Youngs' to bring some water in pails when Dr. Graves' automobile came along, flying as if some one was dying, and frightened me so I began to run, and stubbed my toe on a rock and fell down flat in the road, and the water went all over me, and filled my shoes so I had to change everything I had on my back. When I got back in the kitchen I found they had got the animal out of the pond and turned the water on again, and I had left the faucets open and the water had run over the sink and flooded the kitchen floor, and was running through into the cellar and into some pans of milk. I was nearly ready to drop but the thoughts of our meeting here to-day and the good refreshments we would have braced me up, and I finally got my clothes on the line and here I am for work.

MRS. BROWN *(aside)*. Some yarn! *(Aloud.)* Well, I'm glad my kitchen has no new-fangled notions in it, like faucets and things. A cistern answers my purpose very well.

MRS. BACON. What book are you reading, Mrs. Harvey?

MRS. HARVEY. It's the latest thing out, and extremely interesting, called "The Truth About How Eve Tempted Adam."

MRS. BROWN. Humph! Eve tempted Adam! More likely it was the other way around. I never did have any good opinion of Adam.

MRS. BACON. Well, my husband has always claimed that Adam was in a very hard place, being the only man, and Eve the only woman; it was ——

MRS. BROWN. Hard place fiddlesticks! Now I should say that Adam had it all his own way, and if he wanted a companion bad enough to sacrifice one of his own ribs to make her of, he hadn't ought to blame her for the consequences.

(Enter MRS. GREEN.)

MRS. GREEN. Am I late? I intended to be here early but our president's friend, Mrs. Kingston, was moving into the house opposite us, and I just had to wait till they got unloaded. My, but they've got some elegant furniture. I think I saw every piece. Couches, chiffoniers, a big piannie, and one of those phono-organs. I do hope they won't be the kind that keeps their curtains down all the time so as you can't see what they're doing. I like folks that keep their curtains clean to the top all day.

MRS. BACON. Who are these people and where did they come from?

MRS. GREEN. I tried to read the lettering on the boxes but my eyes ain't quite so good as they used to be, but it looked like J. D. Kingston, New York City.

MRS. HARVEY (*looking up from book*). I heard some very high and aristocratic people from New York were going to move in there.

MRS. BROWN. Yes, I know all about it. There are just three of them. Mr. Kingston, Mrs. Kingston and her brother, Captain Henry Landon, who served in the war, and is unmarried. Mrs. Kingston was a college chum of our president's, and most likely they will come to our church.

MRS. BACON. Ladies, we must call on her at once and invite them to come to our church before the other society gets ahead of us, for they chase every load of furniture that comes to town.

MRS. BROWN. We won't do anything so disgraceful. I don't want any one calling on me until I get settled.

(Enter MRS. CRANE.)

MRS. CRANE. Here I am at last. Thought I should never get started. Had awful luck with everything. John went away and forgot to bring up the coal, and my feet are so lame I can't go down-stairs; so I had to do my cooking on the oil stove, and that smoked so my face got all black; and just as I got all cleaned up and ready to start my hens got out and went straight into Elizabeth Bean's flower-garden, and I had to chase them for an hour. I thought, one while, that I was going to lose my refreshments with you this afternoon. My husband forgot to lock the gate.

MRS. GREEN. My husband forgets sometimes but I always make it a point to praise him when he does anything for me. These men do like to be praised. They're just like children anyway.

MRS. BROWN. That's something I never allow my husband to do. Forgetting is a habit. I began right when we were first married, and I never have any trouble.

(Enter MRS. McLEAN, and JULIA.)

MRS. McLEAN. Good-afternoon, ladies. We are quite late, but sister Julia had a spell of nerves on the way. Two dogs were fighting and they frightened poor Julia so we had to go into the drug-store and get some smelling salts; and who do you think was in there? Our president, and she had Mr. Harris over in the corner talking about raising money for a new library building. I heard her say that the ladies would pledge five thousand dollars. *(Seats JULIA on sofa.)*

MRS. BROWN. Five thousand dollars! That's a crazy

idea. Didn't I tell you she would get us all into some kind of trouble with her high-falutin notions? Five thousand dollars out of aprons!

MRS. HARVEY. We earned two hundred dollars last year. It would take just twenty-five years to earn five thousand. Some of us would be grey headed or dead before that time.

MRS. MCLEAN. Don't talk about anything so sad as grey hair and death, Mrs. Harvey. Perhaps our president has some big scheme up her sleeve about this money. You will all admit that we need a new library building and that it would be a credit to the women to make the first move in the matter, and show the opposite sex that we didn't get the vote for nothing.

MRS. BROWN. I fail to see what getting the vote has to do with raising five thousand dollars. Perhaps our president will ask her aristocratic friends, who have just moved to town, to help. Perhaps the unmarried captain brother would enjoy meeting some of our fair members.

(Looks to JULIA.)

JULIA *(rises from couch)*. Unmarried brother, and a captain! I wonder if he is old or young.

MRS. MCLEAN. Now, Julia, don't get excited, and upset your nerves again. He may be very poor and ugly.

JULIA *(walking about excitedly)*. A captain! I always did like gold stripes and brass buttons. I must go out for a walk; perhaps I will meet Captain Landon on the street. If I should be so fortunate I will surely tell him how proud the ladies of Greenville are to have a soldier in our midst.

MRS. MCLEAN. My dear Julia, you wouldn't be so indiscreet. *(Goes and leads her to sofa.)* Sit down and calm your nerves.

MRS. BACON. Oh, come off with all that stuff about nerves, Mrs. McLean. Julia needs a good "jolt."

MRS. MCLEAN. A jolt! What do you mean, my dear Mrs. Bacon?

MRS. BACON. Let her go in, head over heels, if she wants to, after the Captain. She'll learn her lesson same

as the rest of us have. She thinks love is the next thing to going to heaven in a handbox, and when she finds out her mistake she'll get a good jolt. (*All laugh.*)

MRS. McLEAN. How you do talk, Mrs. Bacon. Your language is quite unfit for dear Julia to hear.

MRS. BACON (*passes apron to JULIA, laughing*). Here's an apron for you to make, Julia. Go to it and forget the Captain.

JULIA. I am sure I can never forget him. (*Sews.*) Captain Landon, that is a good sounding name. I would like to see him.

(*Enter MRS. HOLDEN.*)

MRS. HOLDEN. Good-afternoon, ladies. I am so glad you came early, for I have a wonderful proposition to make to you, and we need time to talk it over.

MRS. GREEN. Madam President, before you begin to talk business, won't you tell us about the Kingstons who are moving into the Shaw house? Who are they, and where did they come from, and why did they move to Greenville?

MRS. HOLDEN. Certainly. Mrs. Kingston was my dearest chum and room-mate at college, and then she married David Kingston, a very wealthy New York business man, and they have always lived in the city, but her brother, Captain Henry Landon, who was wounded in the war, wanted to come into the country where he could hunt and fish and get back his health before going into business with Mr. Kingston, so they have decided to come to Greenville for a while. Of course it is a great pleasure to me having Mrs. Kingston so near me, and if we make it real pleasant for her, ladies, perhaps they will purchase the Shaw house and remain here permanently.

MRS. BROWN. Well, I can't see how anybody in their right mind could choose to leave a great big city and come into this little forgotten-spot-on-the-map and settle down for keeps. You just bet your life they will pack up and go back to the city after they have had one year of it.

JULIA. But the Captain wouldn't get his hunting and fishing, dear Mrs. Brown.

MRS. MCLEAN. Don't get excited, Julia; remember your nerves.

MRS. BROWN. Hunting and fishing be hanged! The Captain's ill health is probably an excuse to lie back on his rich brother-in-law and get supported.

MRS. HARVEY. My dear Mrs. Brown, remember the Commandments and don't judge others. I am sure we ought to feel very proud to have some rich city folks come to live in our town.

MRS. BACON. Perhaps Mrs. Kingston will join our society. If she does I will ask her to come on the apron committee with me, for Mrs. Whitney never gets around on time, and I can never get enough cut for the ladies to work on and the time draws near for our spring sale.

MRS. HOLDEN (*rises and taps on desk*). Ladies, I have a very important matter to bring before you this afternoon. You all know there has been a great deal of talk about a new library building in town, and that we need a more suitable place where our children can find good reading and happy surroundings. Some of our good citizens have tried in many ways to arouse public opinion and get a sum pledged large enough to warrant a beginning, but so far they have met with defeat; and the general opinion is that it will be impossible to raise ten thousand dollars in a little town like Greenville.

MRS. BROWN. There are plenty of people in town who can afford to give it if they cared to but they are mostly all croakers.

JULIA. Perhaps Mr. Kingston and Captain Landon would be interested to help.

MRS. MCLEAN. Julia! Julia! Don't interrupt the president.

MRS. HOLDEN. Now I have a scheme to present to you to-day, and if you are all willing to help me carry it out, our little society can set a shining example for the men and prove to them that the vote is safe in our hands.

MRS. GREEN. You can never convince my husband. He is set as the hills and says the country will soon go to the dogs.

MRS. CRANE. My husband always forgets to vote, and

says if women want the vote let them have it so long as it doesn't cost anything.

MRS. BROWN. That's a fine opinion to hold. If we all thought that way the country would go to the dogs indeed.

MRS. HARVEY. Let us hear the president's scheme to the end and not interrupt again.

MRS. HOLDEN. It all occurred to me while I was reading this little article in the *Piscataquis Observer*. (*Produces newspaper clipping and reads.*) Died in California, April 10, 1918, Frantz Leibtag, a German, who for years lived a hermit's life in a log camp near Greenville, Maine. A note was found in his pocket saying he was a bachelor and had no relatives and that when the war broke out he drew all of his money out of the banks and buried five thousand dollars of it in a cave on the mountain near his camp, and took the rest and journeyed to California, hoping to aid his country in some way, but a fatal illness had taken hold of him and he would soon be laid to rest, but it was his wish that the money in the cave should go to the little town that had given him shelter for so many years, and that it should be used to establish a Library Fund.

MRS. CRANE. Sakes alive! Did you find all that in the *Piscataquis Observer*?

MRS. HOLDEN. Yes, it was copied from a California paper. I have talked the matter over with some of the Select Men and they do not credit the story. Some think he was crazy and left the note in his pocket to attract attention, but I believe it and am determined to pay a visit to his camp. Think what it would mean to us to get five thousand dollars. It would make the few hundred we earn with aprons pale into insignificance.

(*Ladies all sigh.*)

MRS. BACON. It's a lot of money.

MRS. GREEN. Maybe if we could get all that money it might convince my husband that women were good for something besides washing dishes and scrubbing floors.

MRS. HOLDEN. That is the point exactly. It would

give us prestige with the men. Now this is my plan. We will ask the men in town to pledge five thousand dollars if the women get the other five. Then we will all take a vacation and go to this camp and search for the hidden treasure.

MRS. HARVEY. It sounds easy.

MRS. BACON. Let's do it! I will help you all I can, Mrs. Holden. Think what a credit it would be to our society to start an enterprise that would be of such lasting public benefit. I am just crazy to try it.

MRS. BROWN. But if we should fail, Mrs. Holden, we would be held up as objects of scorn by the men.

MRS. HOLDEN. Never say fail. If the money is there I am sure we can find it.

MRS. MCLEAN. I should like to try something big like that. I am tired of making aprons.

(Throws down apron.)

JULIA. How many weeks will it take, Mrs. Holden?

MRS. HOLDEN. It may take a day and it may take a year, but we must go prepared to stay until we win.

MRS. CRANE. If I go I shall have to take my cow and hens, for my husband would forget to feed them.

MRS. BROWN. It would be a grand idea, Mrs. Crane, and I will help you along. I will carry the hens and you can drive the cow. *(All laugh.)*

MRS. HOLDEN. Yesterday I sent out three letters to some of the prominent business men in town, and to-day I have sent out five more, and am expecting an answer any minute.

JULIA. Perhaps your friend Mrs. Kingston and the Captain would like to go.

MRS. HOLDEN. That is a good idea, Julia, and I will ask them.

(Enter MRS. WHITNEY.)

MRS. WHITNEY. Am I too late for the refreshments? I left home a long time ago, but met Lizzie Jones and she talked me nearly blind about their new car, and a wonderful trip to Boston; and then she asked me to go into

Lander's store to help her select a new dress, and while she was trying on the dress I was looking around, leisure like, when I heard a lot of talking and laughing over in one corner, and there was Harry Lands and Gene Varney, and Frank Andrews, and two or three more talking about our president, and some kind of a trap she was getting us into. They said it would be a good idea to let us try out such a foolish stunt and get stung. I would like to know what it is all about.

MRS. BACON. If you had been here earlier we should have had these aprons cut, and you would know the whole story. Now our president will have to begin at the beginning again and tell it all over.

MRS. BROWN. For my part I am glad Mrs. Whitney happened to be late, and that she overheard this disagreeable conversation about our plans. Stung indeed. Madam President, I am with you to the bitter end.

(*Enter KATIE, with a letter which she gives to MRS. HOLDEN. She is dressed in white apron and cap.*)

KATIE. Here is a letter for yez what the Jones boy left and he said ye'd be riled when yez read it. When shall I be after bringing in the tea, mum?

MRS. HOLDEN (*takes letter*). In about twenty minutes, Katie. (*Reads aloud.*) "To Mrs. W. B. Holden, President of Universalist Ladies' Aid Society. (*KATIE listens, laughs, and exits.*) Dear Madam: We, the undersigned, being five sane business men of Greenville, have duly considered your noble proposition to establish a Library Fund and, while we do not credit the Leibtag story published in the *Piscataquis Observer*, of a buried treasure reposing in a cave on the mountain side; nevertheless, we are willing to meet you half-way and pledge ourselves to raise an amount equal to yours. If the ladies of your society, whom we know to be comfort-loving and timid (*Ladies all exclaim and repeat "comfort-loving and timid" and grow very indignant as the letter continues.*), are willing to tramp over a mountainous foot-path, eat and sleep in a lonely camp, inhabited only by the ghost of a departed German bachelor, we give you Godspeed in

your undertaking ; and should you be so fortunate as to find the hidden treasure we pledge ourselves to furnish dollar for dollar, and to elect some of your worthy members to the Board of Directors. (*Ladies all exclaim.*) Furthermore, in order to protect you from masculine ridicule in case you should fail in your undertaking and also to test your detective ability (*Ladies repeat indignantly "detective ability."*) we have decided to place our five thousand dollars in a hidden spot near the camp. We have made some inquiry about the habits of this German bachelor, and everything points to the fact that he was a fugitive from justice, hiding himself in this lonely camp and living in poverty. After receiving your letter we even went so far as to send a man, on horseback, into the camp to search for the plan to the cave. He has just returned, and says there is nothing to be found in the camp but tin cans and skeletons. (*Ladies groan.*) But we will keep to our agreement and hide our money on the mountain and will leave a chart in reasonable evidence so that you will have a more tangible basis to work on than in the case of the bachelor's legacy. We wish you success in your undertaking but look out for bears and ghosts. Signed —

(*Insert the names of five prominent local business men.*)

MRS. BROWN. Well, I call that some sarcasm. Comfort loving and timid indeed. They think they can frighten us with their talk about bears and ghosts.

MRS. BACON. I never *have* had a good opinion of those five men and now I *hate* them.

MRS. HARVEY. Hate is not a good word, my dear Mrs. Bacon.

MRS. BACON. Who cares anything about good words? I wouldn't waste good words on them if I had any. Detective ability indeed! We'll show them that we can't be frightened by their silly talk about ghosts and skeletons.

MRS. HOLDEN. It seems they sent a man, on horseback, to the camp this morning, to search for the plan to the cave and he couldn't find anything but tin cans and skeletons.

MRS. CRANE. That doesn't prove anything. Men are blind. My husband couldn't find his vest this morning and he had it on all the time he was hunting.

(All laugh.)

MRS. WHITNEY. So they are going to put their five thousand dollars in a hidden spot to test out our detective ability, are they? That's what they were talking about in the store, when they said it would be a good plan to let us try out our scheme and get stung.

MRS. BROWN (*sarcastically*). Yes, and I suppose they think when we get stung they will be perfectly justified in holding us up to masculine ridicule. Humph! that settles it with me. (*Rises and bows dramatically to the president.*) Madam President, I am with you to the bitter end. We cannot afford to fail, for our reputation is at stake and if I was president of this society I would start the excursion to-morrow.

MRS. HOLDEN. Yes, of course, but wouldn't it be best to send a man on ahead to clean up the camp, and cut some wood and ——

MRS. BACON. Man indeed! There will be no man in this game if I play it to a finish.

JULIA. Perhaps Captain Landon would like to go with us, if he is fond of hunting.

MRS. HOLDEN. I will ask him, Julia. Perhaps ——

MRS. MCLEAN. Julia dear, we are to have no men. It wouldn't be good for your nerves.

MRS. WHITNEY. I agree with Mrs. Bacon, not to have any man about the camp, for, if we should find the money, he would be sure to claim the credit.

MRS. HARVEY. Of course he would, for men haven't changed since Adam claimed that Eve was made from one of his ribs.

(All laugh, and agree to the statement.)

MRS. HOLDEN. Sit down again, ladies, and I will call Katie to bring in the refreshments. I came near forgetting all about it. (*Goes to door and speaks to KATIE;*

then comes down c.) Please be seated again and we will decide what day to start on our excursion.

MRS. BROWN. I am going to start to-morrow and I'm going right home now to get ready. If those men are going up there to make trouble for us, they will find we are just as smart as they are. If anybody wants to go along with me, meet me at the four corners to-morrow morning at seven o'clock. *[Exit.]*

MRS. BACON. I'm going with her. We'll have everything all cleaned up and ready for living when the rest of you get there, then we can begin our search for the money in earnest. *(Goes to MRS. HOLDEN soothingly.)* Don't be afraid of ghosts and bears, Mrs. Holden. I'll take my son's army gun along and nothing shall molest us. Good-bye till we meet again. *[Exit.]*

MRS. HOLDEN. But who will cut the wood and build the fires if we don't have a man with us?

MRS. GREEN. I will. I have to do it at home, for my husband always forgets it, and I am well trained in the art. I will take an axe and a saw, and I believe I will go along with the others. I am getting quite enthused. *[Exit.]*

MRS. CRANE. I think it will be a great lark and I am going right home to pack up the hens and go along with them. I hope Molly Moo will lead all right. *[Exit.]*

MRS. WHITNEY. Well, this is like taking some of the wind out of your sails, Mrs. Holden, but the ladies mean well and know the woods better than you do. Guess that hoax about the ghost and skeletons kind of upset you, didn't it?

MRS. HOLDEN. Well, I confess I don't enjoy the prospect, but I got the ladies into this affair and I suppose I must see it through, but I think I agree with Julia that it would be nice to invite Captain Landon to go with us.

(JULIA and MRS. MCLEAN are putting on hats.)

MRS. MCLEAN. Oh, my dear Mrs. Holden, you wouldn't do anything so unwise. It would upset Julia's nerves completely. Come, Julia, we must hurry home and prepare for this great excursion. *[Exeunt.]*

MRS. HARVEY. We must be going too, Mrs. Whitney. Don't worry about anything, Mrs. Holden, and meet us at the four corners to-morrow morning at seven o'clock.

[*Exeunt.*]

MRS. HOLDEN (*reflecting*). It sounds all right, but I think I will consult with Detective Rogers about the advisability of women staying alone in that lonely camp. (*Goes to telephone, gives number.*) Detective Rogers—this is Mrs. William Holden. I want to ask you if it would be advisable and safe for nine or ten women to stay a few days in a camp on Blue Mountain, without male protection. What's that—safety in numbers—well, yes—I meant in regard to wild animals and—what's that—bears—(*Enter KATIE with tray piled high with sandwiches.*) did you say there were bears all along the road? (*Drops the receiver.*) Oh, oh! (*Wrings hands.*) Katie, you were right. There are bears and ghosts and skeletons, but we must go —

(*Puts handkerchief to eyes and exits crying.*)

KATIE (*looks surprised*). Saints preserve us and it's her own doin's. (*Looks at tray and at empty room.*) Everybody has flew de coop. Whatever will I do with all those refreshments? (*Thinks.*) I have it! I'll jist take them right along to the camp. They'll be good to feed the skilitons. [*Exit.*]

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*The interior of camp in woods. Living-room with table c.; bed L. front; one or two chairs, and exits R. and L. Windows covered with old newspapers. A hunter's horn hanging on wall, with other camp decorations. An old pillow and blanket on bed.*

(As the curtain rises a loud pounding is heard outside followed by voices.)

MRS. BACON. There, I thought I'd get that door open if I pounded long enough. *(Enters with gun in hand.)* Lucky I brought that gun along *(MRS. GREEN enters with baskets, axe and saw, etc.)*, or we never could have opened it.

MRS. GREEN *(looking around)*. Well, here we are at last. What a dirty old camp this is. Lordie, let's get some of the windows open quick. *(Holds nose.)* Seems to me I can smell skeletons or something worse.

(Goes to window.)

MRS. BACON *(going to window)*. All the good air is stopped out with German newspapers; no wonder it smells bad in here. Let's tear them off and use them for kindling a fire. *(Looks around.)* Oh! here is the cook-stove, out in this little rabbit's coop. *[Exit.]*

MRS. GREEN *(goes to bed)*. And this is where the old fellow slept. *(Takes up blanket and smells of it.)* Goodness gracious! Let's get this out of the way as soon as possible. I am glad we brought along our own blankets.

(Holds blankets at arm's length. Enter MRS. BACON L.)

MRS. BACON. Drat that old stove! The fire won't burn. I'm going out to see if the chimney has caved in. I'll take the blankets out for an airing and you can bring out the pillow. *[Exit R.]*

MRS. GREEN (*takes up pillow*). Another dirty old thing. I wonder if he had "cooties."

(*Holds it by one corner and throws it out the door R.*)

MRS. BACON (*outside*). Hi there! Not quite so hard. It may be loaded.

MRS. GREEN (*laughing at door*). Yes, it probably is loaded.

(*Enter MRS. BACON R.*)

MRS. BACON. I can hear a cow-bell tinkling at the foot of the hill, and I believe Mrs. Crane and Mrs. Brown are coming with Molly Moo and the hens.

MRS. GREEN. That was a jolly good idea. Mrs. Crane has got more good sense than all the rest of us put together, even if she has got a husband that forgets.

MRS. BACON. Maybe that's what has developed her good sense.

MRS. GREEN. Maybe so! Maybe so!

(*Loud tinkling of cow-bell outside. Enter MRS. BROWN with large crate of hens, and other bundles. Sets crate on floor, and sits on it. Takes off hat, and fans herself.*)

MRS. BROWN. Oh, I'm all in! That hill nearly finished me. I think we could earn five thousand dollars easier taking in washings.

(*More tinkling heard outside. Enter MRS. CRANE with the end of large rope in her hand.*)

MRS. CRANE. Wish I could find something to tie this old cow up to while I milk her. (*Looks around the room, sees large nail, ties the rope.*) Did any of you women bring along a big pail?

(*MRS. BACON empties things out of pail and gives it to MRS. CRANE.*)

MRS. BROWN. I thought you only milked cows at night and in the morning.

MRS. CRANE. Yes, but I thought it would be easier

for Mollie Moo to carry the milk over the mountain than for me to do it, so I didn't milk her this morning.

MRS. GREEN. Well, you are a far-seeing woman, Mrs. Crane, and no mistake. No man would ever have thought so far as that.

MRS. BACON (*at window*). Here comes Katie, and the rest of them must be coming soon. It's almost twelve o'clock and we must be preparing a lunch, for they will be hungry. We must make it look inviting for our president, as this is her first experience in camp life.

MRS. BROWN. Our president is no better than the rest of us. She got us into this mess and now she can take her medicine with the rest of us.

(*Enter KATIE, breathless, and loaded with bundles, etc.*)

KATIE. May the Holy Saints be aisy with the soul of—(*Insert local name.*) for telling me the dumb lie that the road to this camp was aisy to find. How did you wimmins ever get here so early? (*Puts down bundles and straightens hat with an angry gesture.*) There are four or five more of them lunatics down at the foot of the mountain, waiting for bears to come and eat them up. I was so scairt I just runned all the way.

(*Looks around room, disgusted.*)

MRS. BACON. Hope you've got something good in these baskets, Katie.

KATIE. Sure and I've got all of them sandwiches I made for you yesterday. Nice ones you was, goin' off before I brought in the tea, after I left my scrubbing to make it.

MRS. BROWN. We were very foolish, Katie, but never mind, they will taste just as good to-day. I feel as though I could eat a dozen now.

(*Enter MRS. CRANE with pail of milk.*)

MRS. CRANE. Here is a nice pail of milk for our lunch, Katie, and if Mrs. Brown can spare her perch for a little while I will take the hens outdoors (*Exit KATIE*

with pail of milk.) so they will get busy and lay us some eggs for breakfast.

(MRS. BROWN *rises from crate* and MRS. CRANE *takes it and exits.*)

MRS. BROWN. Well, I wish they would all hurry up and get here. I am hungry.

MRS. BACON. I suppose Julia is having a spell of nerves. It makes me sick the way they pamper her. I have a mind to give her a dose of medicine, while we are up here, that will cure her forever of such nonsense.

MRS. GREEN. It looks to me as though she was beyond help. I think it is a chronic case.

(*Enter* MRS. CRANE *with hands full of eggs.*)

MRS. CRANE. There, I found all these in the crate. Nobody can say I haven't done my part toward helping along this excursion. There's one from Elizabeth, one from Jennie Jones, one from Mary Jane, one from Annie and Julia, and one from Sarah Leghorn, but Henry Ford flew into one of the trees and is crowing as though he was worth ten million dollars. (*All laugh.*)

MRS. BROWN (*at window*). Here they come, five of them. My, but they look sporty. Mrs. Holden will soon put aside that white hat and dress in this dirty camp. And look at Julia! She's got on pink bloomers. Well, I never!

(*Enter* MRS. HOLDEN, MRS. WHITNEY, MRS. HARVEY, MRS. MCLEAN, *and* JULIA.)

MRS. HOLDEN. However did Katie get up that hill with such a load? My, what a climb! How long have you been here, ladies? (*Looks around camp.*) So this is where we are to eat, sleep, and be merry, is it? Looks kind of spooky outside. Guess when it comes night, we will wish we had brought a man with us.

MRS. BROWN. Oh, my goodness no, Mrs. Holden! No lords of creation with us this time. The men think they run the world because they are stronger than we

are, but it is the woman's influence every time that makes their lives, for good or bad, and she never gets any credit for it. This is the time we will run our own job and get all the credit.

MRS. GREEN. And all the money.

MRS. WHITNEY. Have any of you looked for a paper or plan, telling how to get to the cave?

MRS. BACON. No, we have been trying to get this place fit to eat and sleep in. It was just awful when we first came in, wasn't it, Mrs. Green?

MRS. GREEN. Yes, we opened the windows, then put the blankets out to air, and a dirty old pillow which looked as though it was inhabited with something we don't want.

MRS. MCLEAN. How you do talk, Mrs. Green. I fear you will shock Julia's nerves. Poor dear! It was such a climb over the rocks and fallen trees. Hadn't you better lie down and rest yourself?

JULIA. I think if I had a pillow I would go out in the woods and lie down, it is so stuffy in here.

MRS. HOLDEN. A pillow. Who brought a pillow? (*Goes to door and calls to KATIE.*) Did you bring some pillows with our blankets?

(*Enter KATIE with long poker and smooch on face.*)

KATIE. What do yez take me for? One of them things what travels on deserts with a hump on his back? Pillows! Why don't yez ask me if I brought a looking-glass, or a down quilt, or a bath-tub. The Devil take the whole lot of yez anyway, for getting me into this place.

[*Exit.*]

MRS. WHITNEY. Poor Katie! I think I will go out and help her start the fire. Come, Mrs. Harvey, let's be helpful.

[*Exit.*]

MRS. HARVEY. Just a minute. I want to unpack these books. My goodness, I never would have thought of bringing all these books if I had known it was such a climb up that hill. Here's reading for all of us.

(*Takes out books and reads off titles; some can be ridiculous.*)

MRS. GREEN. Sakes alive, Mrs. Harvey! Guess you think we are all literary. I don't mean to spend all my time with my nose in a book.

MRS. HARVEY. You might do worse. (*Puts on apron.*) There! Now I am ready for work and we will have a fire in a jiffy. [*Exit.*]

MRS. CRANE. I was looking at that pillow when I was milking Molly Moo, and I think it has got some very nice feathers in it, and if we had something to make a new case of, we could put those feathers into it and the pillow would be good as new.

MRS. GREEN. That is a fine idea, Mrs. Crane, and I will help you. (*Takes off apron.*) We will use this apron. It is strong and clean. Come, let's be about it.

[*Exeunt.*]

MRS. HOLDEN. And we will attend to the luncheon.

MRS. BROWN. I am not going to wait for any luncheon to be served. I'm just going to take a sandwich in my hand and be off, hunting for the treasure. It is one o'clock and it will soon be too dark to find a cave. [*Exit.*]

MRS. HOLDEN. Haven't we got to find the directions first? I brought along an old German Dictionary, which I used in college, for it is most likely, if we find any papers, they will be written in German.

MRS. BACON. I think I will follow Mrs. Brown's example and take a sandwich and be off and not waste any time eating. You sit tight on the German Dictionary and I will go to the woods looking for the money. Wouldn't you like to come with me, Julia?

JULIA. Oh, I think not, thank you. I don't like the woods. I wish Captain Landon had come with us.

MRS. BACON (*aside*). There she goes again. I'll fix her. [*Exit.*]

MRS. MCLEAN. You mustn't speak so frankly, Julia. I fear it will annoy Mrs. Holden.

MRS. HOLDEN. Not at all, Mrs. McLean, I quite agree with her, and wish we could have had the Captain with us, but he had to go to the city on business. He said he would be with us soon as possible after he returned. (*Shrugs her shoulders.*) Ugh! I don't like the idea of staying in this place over night.

(Noise is heard in the kitchen like tin cans falling. All jump and huddle together. KATIE rushes in with her apron over her face.)

KATIE. Saints preserve us. That's the ghost coming down the chimney.

(Enter MRS. WHITNEY and MRS. HARVEY, laughing, with box.)

MRS. WHITNEY. A nice little joke played on us, and my suspicions rest on those five "sane business men" who were so generous with their money. A dozen tin cans were stuffed into the stovepipe to prevent us from making a fire. Mrs. Harvey thought there was some obstruction and just lifted the pipe from the stove and out fell all those tin cans and this box, which says, "open with care."

KATIE. Don't open it! *(Screaming and running out.)* Don't open it! It's the skeleton. *[Exit.]*

MRS. HOLDEN *(looks at writing)*. Where have I seen that writing before? I believe it is the same as that letter sent to us yesterday. *(Takes a note out of her bag and compares writing.)* You are right, Mrs. Whitney. Those terrible men are at the bottom of all our trouble and it is contemptible. Now my fighting blood is up and I am more determined than ever to win. Give me the box. I am not afraid to open it. We will see what little joke they have for us. *(Opens the box and takes out a paper and reads.)* "Dear Ladies: We congratulate you if one of your number has shown detective ability enough to get possession of this box. We are presuming, of course, that you have, long ago, given up the quest and started for home, like good sensible ladies; but in case you should still wish to continue the search for gold, we are enclosing a diagram which, if properly deciphered, will lead you to the spot where we have placed our personal checks for five thousand dollars, according to agreement. Of course you understand the conditions are that you must find the money which belonged to the German bachelor before you can have

legal possession of ours, even if you should find it. We wish you all success in your undertaking." Well, the nerve of those men. (*Turns over the paper and sees plan.*) What does all this mean? (*Reads.*) "Out in the open—look north—one step east—five steps south—six yards west—two rods north—left arm extended—fall on knees—dig."

MRS. WHITNEY. Well, I guess your German Dictionary won't help you much to decipher that enigma.

MRS. HARVEY (*takes the paper*). Well, I call that nothing short of an insult. They don't want us to find the money.

MRS. MCLEAN. Do you suppose they really have buried the money out in the woods?

MRS. HOLDEN. I do not know, but I intend to find out. I told you my fighting blood was up and all the savagery of the cave man possesses me at this moment. They probably have put something somewhere, and I am going to find it. Come on, ladies. Wish I had a good yardstick.

MRS. WHITNEY. I have a tape measure in my bag.

(*Gets measure.*)

MRS. MCLEAN. A rather slender looking instrument for outdoor surveying.

MRS. HOLDEN. Slender or not, it has inches and feet on it and I am going to carry out their directions to the limit.

MRS. WHITNEY. I am with you.

MRS. HARVEY. So am I. You take the tape measure, Mrs. Holden the paper, and I will bring the stove-shovel.

MRS. MCLEAN. I should like to go with you, but dear Julia can't stay alone.

JULIA. Oh, don't mind me. I am going out for a walk.

MRS. HOLDEN (*takes a book from her bag*). Here is something to read, Julia. We won't be gone long, and Katie is in the kitchen. You can't be lonely.

MRS. MCLEAN. Here is your sweater, and don't go far into the woods alone; you might get lost.

(*Exeunt* MRS. HOLDEN, MRS. WHITNEY, MRS. HARVEY and MRS. McLEAN.)

JULIA (*takes up book*). Emancipation of women by the vote.

(*Enter* KATIE *with a letter*.)

KATIE. Whist! Here is a letter for yez from a foine looking man all drest up like a soldier and said his name was Captain Landon.

JULIA. Captain Landon! (*Puts her hand on her heart*.) At last. (*Takes the letter*.) Where was he, Katie, when he gave this letter to you?

KATIE. Well, after I got that bothering old fire started, I was that doity I went outside to wash me face, and to blow some of the soot out of me lungs, when along comes a tap on me arm, and I was that scairt I started to run. But a firm hand held me, and a voice in my ear said, "Don't be afraid of me, Katie, I am Captain Landon." Did you ever hear the likes of him, calling me Katie? I was just going to tell him I didn't allow no man but Billy McCloud to call me that, when I looked up and he was laughing, just beautiful, and asked me if I would take a letter to Miss Julia King, and that is the letter. Begorry, he is a looker all right. Ain't you going to read your letter?

JULIA (*holds letter unopened*). I wish sister was here. I wonder what she would say.

KATIE (*groans aside*). Ah, go 'long wid yez. Haven't you got feet to walk on without borrowing somebody else's?

JULIA. I believe I *will* read it. It can't do any harm. (*Reads letter aloud*.) "My dearest Julia: You will excuse me for addressing you with seeming familiarity, but I feel as though I had always known you and loved you. I have tried many times to speak to you and declare my adoration, but your sister is always near you, like a shadow in the night."

KATIE (*interrupting*). That's right, she is. I am glad she is gone to the woods this time.

JULIA (*resumes*). "So I have followed you into these

alluring woods, hoping to see you and tell you that I love you. I feel as though I would sacrifice the happiness of a dozen years for a single kiss from your sweet lips. Won't you meet me, darling, at the foot of the mountain, where we can be alone and look into each other's eyes and—and read the meaning of love? Come, I am waiting for you. Your own Captain Landon."

KATIE (*aside*). Some letter.

JULIA (*reflecting*). It doesn't *sound* much as Captain Landon looks.

KATIE. Never you mind how he looks, Miss Julia. Looks is decavin', especially men's looks.

JULIA. But I thought getting the vote was going to emancipate women from all this kind of love-making.

KATIE (*aside*). Oh, the poor darling. (*To JULIA*.) Who told you such dumb lies?

JULIA (*holds up book*). It is right here in this book. (*Reads.*) "At last women have the ballot, which will emancipate them from men's ——"

KATIE (*takes book away gently*). Thim kind of books is writ by old duffers who are eighty or more, and can't get a living no other way. They ain't meant for young folks like yous to read. (*Takes hold of her arm.*) Come, the Captain is waiting for you.

JULIA. No, Katie, I am afraid. I won't know what to say to him.

KATIE. Say to him? Trust me, he will do all the saying. (*Goes up to JULIA and speaks very confidentially.*) Say, here is a secret for you. The first time Billy McCloud kist me, I was that shaky he had to put his arm around me to keep me from falling, and I said, "Oh, Billy, I want you to, and I don't want you to," and then he jest up and kist me and—oh, geest ——

JULIA (*rises*). I think I will go, and if sister returns before I do, you can tell her I am out for a walk. [*Exit.*]

KATIE. I'll tell her. (*Takes apron and wipes face, then takes money from pocket and looks at the bill.*) Guess I earned my fiver that time.

(*Enter MRS. CRANE and MRS. GREEN with pillow in one hand and roll of paper in other.*)

MRS. GREEN (*excitedly*). We've found a paper all rolled up in the pillow which looks like the plan of the cave. Oh, where is Mrs. Holden? Find her quick and tell her we need the German Dictionary.

(*Hunts around room.*)

KATIE. They've gone to the woods, mum.

MRS. CRANE. Run after them, Katie, and tell them to come quick or, better still, take this horn (*Takes horn from wall and gives it to KATIE.*) and blow it as if the house was on fire. [*Exit KATIE, blowing horn.*]

(*Enter MRS. BROWN, looking tired and discouraged.*)

MRS. BROWN. I've searched the woods everywhere and I believe the whole story is a fabrication. I fear we are doomed to disappointment.

MRS. GREEN. Never give up the ship, Mrs. Brown. If you will help me find that German Dictionary we can soon tell you the direction to the cave.

MRS. BROWN. Honest to goodness, girls, are you telling me the truth?

MRS. CRANE (*holds up the paper*). Come and look for yourself.

MRS. BROWN (*takes the paper*). Why, here is a drawing of a brook, and a tree, and a —

MRS. GREEN. Oh, here is the dictionary.

MRS. BROWN. Now see if you can find what Der Strom is.

MRS. GREEN (*looks in the dictionary*). Der Strom means a stream.

MRS. CRANE. I will write it down.

(*Writes on paper.*)

MRS. BROWN. Now find Die Eiche. (*Laughs.*) I like good old United States best.

MRS. CRANE. Me too. No wonder the old fellow died.

MRS. GREEN. Die Eiche means the oak.

MRS. BROWN (*jumps up, speaks excitedly*). I saw the

stream and the big oak tree this afternoon ; hurry, hurry, let's get the rest. Find Der Tabak.

MRS. GREEN. "Tabak"—(*Following along with finger.*) tobacco.

MRS. CRANE. Tobacco, that can't be right!

MRS. BROWN. Maybe it means the money is in a tobacco box.

MRS. GREEN. Most likely that is it, for he would be sure to have a tobacco box on hand.

MRS. BROWN. Now find Der Stein. Oh, I am so excited.

MRS. GREEN. Der Stein means a stone.

MRS. BROWN. Now what have we got, Mrs. Crane?

MRS. CRANE (*reads*). The stream—oak—tobacco—stone. Not much sense, I should say.

MRS. BROWN. Now one more word. Aufheben. I am glad that is the last.

MRS. GREEN. Aufheben, to lift.

MRS. BROWN. I have it. We are to lift the stone by the oak on the stream, and there is the cave. Come quick, it's getting dark.

(*Exeunt* MRS. BROWN, MRS. CRANE and MRS. GREEN.)

(*Enter* KATIE on tiptoes. *She goes to window.*)

KATIE. Whist, he's got his arm around her. Faith and they are coming in here. (*Tiptoes back to R. Exit.*)

(*Enter* MRS. BACON, wearing a long army coat and hat, and made up as Captain Landon, and JULIA.)

MRS. BACON. I am so glad we are alone, dear Julia. (*Goes to her and puts arm about her.*) Perhaps you will give me one more kiss before we part. (*Kisses her.*) How many does that make?

JULIA. About twenty-five, I think. When shall we announce our engagement, Captain dear?

MRS. BACON. Just as soon as your sister comes. (*Voices heard outside.*) Oh, here they are now.

(*Enter* MRS. HOLDEN, MRS. WHITNEY, MRS. HARVEY and MRS. McLEAN.)

MRS. HOLDEN (*holds a box high in air*). Here we are with the last part of our legacy first. It was merely an accident that I tumbled onto the spot where it was buried. I had given up in despair and was looking about for a little knoll to rest on, when I saw fresh earth scattered about. I thought at first some wild animal might be around me, and I was about ready to run away when I saw this. (*Produces a pipe.*)

MRS. HARVEY

MRS. MCLEAN

MRS. WHITNEY

} (*together*). A man's pipe!

MRS. HOLDEN. Yes, and then I gradually tumbled to the fact that I was almost sitting on the money. I didn't need a shovel to uncover it. Here it is, all in this little box. Just take a look. Five bona fide checks. But, ladies, we've got to find the other first—(*Sees MRS. BACON and JULIA.*) Captain Landon! What a surprise.

(*Rushes to him to grasp his hand.*)

JULIA (*rushes to MRS. MCLEAN*). Oh, sister Marion, I am engaged to —

MRS. HOLDEN. What does this all mean? (*MRS. BACON takes off hat and hair falls down.*) Mrs. Bacon disguised as Captain Landon!

MRS. BACON (*laughs*). I only played a little joke on Julia, to cure her of "nerves." I dressed up as Captain Landon and lured her into the woods and made love to her. She's easy. Too easy, Mrs. McLean, in spite of all your guardianship. Forgive me, Julia.

JULIA. Oh, oh, don't you ever mention *love* to me again. Where is that Katie? I'll bang her head for her.

(*Rushes to kitchen.*)

MRS. MCLEAN. Poor Julia! I must find her. It may affect her mind.

MRS. HOLDEN. Well, you certainly look the part. Where are the rest of the ladies? We must find them and tell them the good news. (*Sees open dictionary and paper.*) What's this? (*Looks at paper.*) Why, I believe they have found some clue to the cave. (*Goes to*

door and calls.) Katie! Katie! Where are the rest of the ladies?

(Enter KATIE.)

KATIE. Don't know, mum. The last I saw of them they were taking to the woods, mum.

MRS. WHITNEY. Perhaps they saw a bear.

MRS. HARVEY. Or a man.

KATIE *(to MRS. HOLDEN)*. Your friend, Captain Landon, has been here this afternoon. Geest, he's a looker! *(Holds up five-dollar bill.)* He gave me this.

MRS. HOLDEN. So Mrs. Bacon fooled you too. Is that the same Captain Landon who gave you the money?

(Points to MRS. BACON.)

KATIE *(turning)*. Saints preserve us! Did yez ever see the loiks of that, and she a foine lady, too.

MRS. BACON *(laughing)*. I suppose if your friend Billy should see me now he would arrest me, but you mustn't tell him, Katie, for you know I gave you some hush money.

KATIE. Hush money, was it? I thought yez paid a big price for something.

MRS. BACON *(pleadingly)*. Promise me you won't tell, Katie. I wouldn't like the men to hear about it, especially the Captain.

KATIE. I promise. I belave I like the looks of yez better than the real one. *[Exit.]*

(Noise is heard outside. Cow-bell ringing, and general pandemonium. Enter MRS. BROWN, MRS. GREEN and MRS. CRANE, very much excited.)

MRS. BROWN *(with tobacco box in hand)*. We've got it, ladies. Here is the German bachelor's legacy.

MRS. GREEN. It's all there, neatly packed away in good United States one hundred dollar bills.

MRS. CRANE. We felt sorry for the old fellow, because he had to die, and couldn't come back for it himself.

MRS. HOLDEN. All discovered on the first day of our

excursion. Well, I guess this is the time we won't be held up to masculine ridicule. Ladies, all listen; we also have good news for you; we have found the other five thousand dollars.

MRS. BROWN (*sinks into chair*). Oh, fan me, fan me! I am so excited.

MRS. WHITNEY. What, is this a moving picture rehearsal?

MRS. HARVEY. I thought it would be dull up here in the woods.

(*Enter JULIA and MRS. McLEAN.*)

MRS. McLEAN. Julia has forgiven you, Mrs. Bacon.

JULIA. Yes, I think I understand now that love, at its best, is only a sham. I thank you, Mrs. Bacon, for enlightening me. I think I will devote the rest of my days to something more useful than love-making.

MRS. BACON. That's the right spirit, Julia. It was only meant for a joke, and I knew you would be a good sport.

MRS. McLEAN. Have you told them of our discovery?

MRS. HOLDEN. Yes, and what surprise do you think they had for me. They have found the bachelor's cave, which was a hole in the ground, under a rock, and have brought forth his legacy, and now we are in legal possession of ten thousand dollars. Think what a victory it is for us all.

MRS. GREEN. I think that news will make some of those "sane business men" of Greenville squeal a little mite.

MRS. BROWN. I hope it will. Maybe they won't be quite so fresh when they address us again.

MRS. BACON (*whirls around and throws hat in air*). Hurrah for the women! Oh, it's great to be a woman. I wouldn't be a man for anything in the world. We are showing them every day that we can do things better than they can.

JULIA. Even to love-making.

MRS. McLEAN. You must forgive and forget, Julia.

MRS. HOLDEN. It's getting awfully dark outside, and

I don't think it's safe for us to stay in this camp alone with all this money.

MRS. GREEN. I can put some of it in my stocking.

MRS. CRANE. We might hide it in the stove.

MRS. BACON. Some one might get up early in the morning and burn it up.

MRS. WHITNEY. I don't like the idea of sleeping in this dirty old camp anyway. Let's go home.

ALL (*exclaim*). To-night?

MRS. HOLDEN. Why not? There will be good moonlight and we could find our way nicely after we were out of the woods.

MRS. MCLEAN. Remember, there are bears and Julia might have a spell of nerves.

JULIA. Excuse me, dear sister, but I will fight my own battles hereafter. Mrs. Bacon has given me a new vision. I won't be trifled with again. If the rest of the ladies are ready to go home, I am, bears or no bears.

MRS. BROWN (*rises*). I am ready to go. (*Looks at watch.*) Five o'clock; just time to get out of the woods before dark. I have heard that bears always prowl around old camps at night, and the old bachelor's ghost might come for his money.

(*All begin packing up their belongings.* MRS. HOLDEN goes to the door and calls to KATIE. Enter KATIE.)

KATIE. What will you have, mum?

MRS. HOLDEN. We have decided to go home to-night, Katie. Will you help some of the ladies and get our things ready as soon as possible? We've found all the money and there is nothing to stay for.

KATIE. Yez womens are sure some winners! Guess yez husbands will hold their tongues to yez after this.

(*Goes to packing hurriedly.*)

MRS. HOLDEN. How shall we tell them the news? They won't believe it until they see the money.

MRS. WHITNEY. You sit down and write them a letter while we do the packing.

MRS. BROWN. Make it just as sarcastic as you can.

Give them a dose of their own medicine, with some ginger in it.

MRS. MCLEAN. How are we going to get all this money home? We may be held up by robbers.

MRS. BACON. Remember, I have a gun.

MRS. CRANE. I've got all I can do to get Molly Moo and the hens ready. I must go out and look for Henry Ford. I bet he is up in the trees now.

MRS. HOLDEN. How is this for a letter? (*Reads.*) "Honorable Gentlemen: We beg to inform you that we have returned from our excursion into the wilderness, and that our detective ability, which you appeared to doubt, was sufficient to discover both sums of money. Should you wish to examine the bachelor's legacy, or, perhaps, take a farewell look at your own checks, we ask you to meet us at the cashier's window of the Guilford Trust Company at 9 A M. Thursday morning. If you should care to have further proof of our ability as detectives, we ask you to give us something harder next time. Thanking you for your generous contribution to the Library Fund, we are very respectfully yours, Mrs. W. B. Holden, President."

ALL (*exclaim*). Good! good!

MRS. BROWN. Now let's be off as soon as possible.

(*All go out with baskets, etc.* MRS. BACON and JULIA last.)

MRS. BACON (*turning to JULIA, at door*). Won't you give me that twenty-seventh kiss, Julia?

JULIA. No, for I may need it for the real Captain Landon.

[*Exeunt* MRS. BACON and JULIA.]

CURTAIN

A COUPLE OF MILLION

An American Comedy in Four Acts

By Walter Ben Hare

Author of "Professor Pepp," "Much Ado About Betty,"
"The Hoodoo," "The Dutch Detective," etc.

Six males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors and an exterior. Plays a full evening. Royalty, ten dollars (\$10.00) for each performance. A more ambitious play by this popular author in the same successful vein as his previous offerings. Bemis Bennington is left two million dollars by his uncle on condition that he shall live for one year in a town of less than five thousand inhabitants and during that period marry and earn without other assistance than his own industry and ability the sum of five thousand dollars. Failing to accomplish this the money goes to one Professor Noah Jabb. This is done despite the energetic opposition of Jabb, who puts up a very interesting fight. A capital play that can be strongly recommended. Plenty of good comedy and a great variety of good parts, full of opportunity.

Price, 35 cents

CHARACTERS

BEMIS BENNINGTON.

HON. JEREMY WISE.

JAMES PATRICK BURNS, "Stubby."

PROFESSOR NOAH JABB.

BEVERLY LOMAN.

SQUIRE PIPER.

FAY FAIRBANKS.

MRS. CLARICE COURTENAY.

GENEVIEVE MCGULLY.

SAMMIE BELL PORTER.

PINK.

Several Hill-Billies.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The law office of Hon. Jeremy Wise, New York City.
A morning in July.

ACT II.—The exterior of the court-house, Opaloopa, Alabama.
An afternoon in October.

ACT III.—Same as Act II. The next afternoon.

ACT IV.—Mrs. Courtenay's sitting-room, Opaloopa, Alabama.
A night in April.

ISOSCELES

A Play in One Act

By Walter Ben Hare

Two male, one female characters. Costumes, modern; scene, an interior. Plays twenty minutes. Royalty \$2.50 for each performance. An admirable little travesty of the conventional emotional recipe calling for husband, wife and lover. Played in the proper spirit of burlesque it is howlingly funny. Strongly recommended for the semi-professional uses of schools of acting. A capital bit for a benefit or exhibition programme, offering a decided novelty.

Price, 25 cents

RED ACRE FARM

A Rural Comedy Drama in Three Acts by Gordon V. May. Seven males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior, one exterior. Plays two hours. An easy and entertaining play with a well-balanced cast of characters. The story is strong and sympathetic and the comedy element varied and amusing. Barnaby Strutt is a great part for a good comedian; "Junior" a close second. Strongly recommended.

Price, 35 cents

THE COUNTRY MINISTER

A Comedy Drama in Five Acts by Arthur Lewis Tubbs. Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery not difficult. Plays a full evening. A very sympathetic piece, of powerful dramatic interest; strong and varied comedy relieves the serious plot. Ralph Underwood, the minister is a great part, and Roxy a strong soubrette; all parts are good and full of opportunity. Clean, bright and strongly recommended.

Price, 35 cents

THE COLONEL'S MAID

A Comedy in Three Acts by C. Leona Dalrymple. Six males, three females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening. An exceptionally bright and amusing comedy, full of action; all the parts good. Capital Chinese low comedy part; two first-class old men. This is a very exceptional piece and can be strongly recommended.

Price, 35 cents

MOSE

A Comedy in Three Acts by C. W. Miles. Eleven males, ten females. Scenery, two interiors; costumes, modern. Plays an hour and a half. A lively college farce, full of the true college spirit. Its cast is large, but many of the parts are small and incidental. Introduces a good deal of singing, which will serve to lengthen the performance. Recommended highly for co-educational colleges.

Price, 25 cents

OUR WIVES

A Farce in Three Acts by Anthony E. Wills. Seven males, four females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays two hours and a half. A bustling, up-to-date farce, full of movement and action; all the parts good and effective; easy to produce; just the thing for an experienced amateur club and hard to spoil, even in the hands of less practical players. Free for amateur performance.

Price, 35 cents

THE SISTERHOOD OF BRIDGET

A Farce in Three Acts by Robert Elwin Ford. Seven males, six females. Costumes, modern; scenery, easy interiors. Plays two hours. An easy, effective and very humorous piece turning upon the always interesting servant girl question. A very unusual number of comedy parts; all the parts good. Easy to get up and well recommended.

Price, 35 cents

HITTY'S SERVICE FLAG

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Eleven female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, an interior. Plays an hour and a quarter. Hitty, a patriotic spinster, quite alone in the world, nevertheless hangs up a service flag in her window without any right to do so, and opens a Tea Room for the benefit of the Red Cross. She gives shelter to Stella Hassy under circumstances that close other doors against her, and offers refuge to Marjorie Winslow and her little daughter, whose father in France finally gives her the right to the flag. A strong dramatic presentation of a lovable character and an ideal patriotism. Strongly recommended, especially for women's clubs.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

MEHITABLE JUDSON, *aged 70.*

LUELLA PERKINS, *aged 40.*

STASIA BROWN, *aged 40.*

MILDRED EMERSON, *aged 16.*

MARJORIE WINSLOW, *aged 25.*

BARBARA WINSLOW, *her daughter, aged 6.*

STELLA HASSY, *aged 25, but claims to be younger.*

MRS. IRVING WINSLOW, *aged 45.*

MARION WINSLOW, *her daughter, aged 20.*

MRS. ESTERBROOK, *aged 45.*

MRS. COBB, *anywhere from 40 to 60.*

THE KNITTING CLUB MEETS

A Comedy in One Act

By Helen Sherman Griffith

Nine female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, an interior. Plays half an hour. Eleanor will not forego luxuries nor in other ways "do her bit," putting herself before her country; but when her old enemy, Jane Rivers, comes to the Knitting Club straight from France to tell the story of her experiences, she is moved to forget her quarrel and leads them all in her sacrifices to the cause. An admirably stimulating piece, ending with a "melting pot" to which the audience may also be asked to contribute. Urged as a decided novelty in patriotic plays.

Price, 25 cents

GETTING THE RANGE

A Comedy in One Act

By Helen Sherman Griffith

Eight female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, an exterior. Well suited for out-of-door performances. Plays an hour and a quarter. Information of value to the enemy somehow leaks out from a frontier town and the leak cannot be found or stopped. But Captain Brooke, of the Secret Service, finally locates the offender amid a maze of false clues, in the person of a washerwoman who hangs out her clothes day after day in ways and places to give the desired information. A capital play, well recommended.

Price, 25 cents

PROFESSOR PEPP

A Farcical Comedy with a College Flavor in Three Acts

By Walter Ben Hare

Nine males, seven females. Costumes, modern; scene, an easy exterior, the same for all three acts. Plays two hours and twenty minutes. Professor Pepp, on a vacation trip to Russia, is initiated by Boris Ardoff, a Russian humorist and former pupil of the Professor's, into a Nihilist Society "The Redeemers," and is so unlucky as to draw the red ball which obliges him to murder the Princess Katchakoffsky. In terror he at once flies from Russia, but Boris, to prolong the joke, writes ahead of him to a friend on the faculty, telling the story and revealing the password—"Bumski." With this weapon everybody in turn has his own way with the terrified Professor, who sees a Nihilist in every bush. A side-splitter with more good parts than any piece of its kind for years. Strongly recommended for school or college performance. *Price, 35 cents*

CHARACTERS

PROFESSOR PETERKIN PEPP, *a nervous wreck.*

MR. C. B. BUTTONMASTER, *a giddy butterfly of forty-eight.*

HOWARD GREEN, *his son, who had the court change his name.*

SIM BATTY, *the police force of a college town.*

PEDDLER BENSON, *working his way through school.*

NOISY FLEMING, *just out of high school.*

PINK HATCHER, *an athletic sophomore.*

BUSTER BROWN, *a vociferous junior.*

BETTY GARDNER, *the professor's ward.*

AUNT MINERVA BOULDER, *his housekeeper, from Skowhegan, Maine.*

PETUNIA MUGGINS, *the hired girl.*

OLGA STOPSKI, *the new teacher of folk-dancing.*

KITTY CLOVER, *a collector of souvenirs.*

VIVIAN DREW, *a college belle.*

IRENE VAN HILT, *a social leader.*

CAROLINE KAY, *the happy little freshman.*

Students, Co-eds, etc.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I. Professor Pepp's residence on the college campus.

ACT II. Same scene. Surrounded by the nihilists.

ACT III. Same scene. A double wedding.

NOT ON THE PROGRAMME

A Comedy in One Act

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Three males, three females. Costumes, modern; scenery, a single interior. Plays forty minutes. Mrs. Whitney, rehearsing for amateur theatricals with Vincent Fielding, a dramatic coach, in her own home, is misunderstood by Ophelia Johnson (colored), her maid, who summons the police to straighten out what seems to her a very criminal state of things. Rastus Brown, a plumber and admirer of Ophelia, helps Officer Hogan to muddle matters into a very laughable state of confusion. Easy and strongly recommended. *Price, 25 cents*

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